

**May 2008**

**Roosevelt County FSA Office**  
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**County Committee Members**

Loren Schledewitz  
Ted Toavs  
Mary Nesbit

**FSA Office Personnel**

Carol Y. Ritter-Fellman, CED  
Julie Williams, Chief PT  
Darcia Larsen, PT  
Dale Friedrich, PT  
Julane Poland, PT  
Judy Grimsrud, PT  
Jill Davidson, PT

**Dates to Remember:**

**May 1** – Deadline to pull cattle off of NAP acres intended for forage

**June 2** – Final loan/LDP availability date for corn, dry peas, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard, safflower, soybeans, small chickpeas, and sunflowers harvested in 2007

**July 15** – Acreage Reporting Deadline

**July 15** – 2007 production for NAP APH deadline

**July 15** – 2007 NAP application for payment deadline

**Notice of Loss** – must be filed within 15 calendars after the date of the disaster occurrence or date damage was apparent

**September 30 – October 1** – Women Stepping Forward for Agriculture, Billings

# Roosevelt County FSA News

## **2008 Crop Certification Process is Underway**

Crop year 2008 map packets have been mailed to all producers in the county. Postcards have also been mailed to each producer notifying them of their scheduled appointment and which program technician in the office will be assisting the producer. Appointments are not set in stone and can be changed by contacting the applicable program technician ahead of time.

**Certification Reminders:** Producers are reminded to **complete the maps according to the instructions included in the map packet. Be sure to include the crop planted, the intended use for the crop, and the planting date. Additional information that will be very helpful to our office is shares for the crop and whether the crop is non-irrigated or irrigated. Please mail the completed black and white copies of the maps back to our office at least a week prior to the scheduled appointment. The colored copy of the maps will remain with the producer. The final date to complete the crop year 2008 certification process is July 15, 2008.**

## **Responsibilities for CRP Contract Holders**

CRP contract holders have certain responsibilities for carrying out the terms and conditions of the CRP contract. Those include, but are not limited to:

- ✓ Control all weeds, insects, pests and other undesirable species to the extent necessary to ensure that the establishment and maintenance of the approved cover is adequately protected and there is no adverse impact on surrounding land.
- ✓ Establish and maintain the required vegetative or water cover and other required practices.
- ✓ No activity may be conducted on CRP acres without authorization.
- ✓ Prior approval must be received from FSA before any harvesting, grazing or other commercial use of the forage may begin.

If CRP land is sold and the new owner does not wish to continue the CRP contract, the previous CRP participant will be required to repay all payments received on the contract plus interest and liquidated damages. Liquidated damages are equal to 25 percent of the annual rental payment on those acres not contracted by the new owner.

**LOAN and LDP Violations**

**Incorrect Certification** is either of the following:

- ❖ Certifying a quantity in excess of the quantity eligible for loan or LDP
- ❖ Making any fraudulent representation with respect to obtaining loans or LDPs.

**Unauthorized Removal** is the movement of any farm-stored loan quantity from the storage structure where the commodity was stored or structures that were designated when the loan was approved to any other storage structure whether or not the structure is located on the producer's farm without prior written authorization from the COC. Unauthorized removal is considered a violation if the producer does not maintain control of the commodity or CCC loses first lien on the collateral.

**Unauthorized Disposition** is the conversion of any loan quantity pledged as collateral for a farm-stored loan without prior written authorization from the COC.

**Consequences of Loan and LDP Violations** may be:

- ❖ Assessment of liquidated damages and other administrative actions, and shall be liable for monetary amounts as specified in the applicable regulations and terms and conditions of the applicable forms.
- ❖ Criminal prosecution under Federal Law.

**CRP Maintenance Incentives**

When the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) was originally announced a \$5/year maintenance rate was added to the contract to maintain the cover. In 2006, that rate was lowered to \$4/year. As of April 11, 2008 that rate has been lowered to \$2/year. The new rate does not affect any contracts previously approved and only applies to contracts approved after April 11, 2008.

Producers are required to perform management activities included in all contracts approved after May, 2003. These activities are eligible for cost-share assistance.

**Loan & LDP Final Availability Dates**

Loans and LDP's are available to eligible producers who have:

- ❖ Reported acreage of the crop for which a loan or LDP is requested.
- ❖ Complied with all other program provisions

Request for loans and LDP's shall be made on or before the final availability date. Following are the final availability dates for crops harvested in 2007 for eligible grains, oilseeds, pulse crops, wool & mohair and honey:

| Commodity  | Availability Date |
|--|-------------------|
| Corn, Grain sorghum, Mustard seed, Safflower seed, Soybeans, Sunflower seed, Dry peas, Lentils and Small chickpeas | May 31, 2008      |
| Wool/mohair for wool/mohair clipped in calendar year 2008  | January 31, 2009  |

**CRP Management Activities**

Beginning with CRP Signup 26 and Continuous CRP Signup 27, all new CRP contracts were required to have a management activity included in the Conservation Plan of Operations (CPO). Management activities must be completed before the end of year 6 for 10 year contracts and before the end of year 9 for 15 year contracts.

Management activities include:

- Residue Management
- Ground Disturbing
- Interseeding Legumes
- Fabric Management
- Fertilization
- Prescribed Burn

Contact the County FSA Office for more detailed information.

### **COC Election Approaching**

Beginning **June 15, 2008**, nominations are being accepted for candidates for a County Committee (COC) position that will soon be vacant.

For COC election purposes Roosevelt County has been divided into three local administrative areas (LAA). Each LAA is represented by one member on the county committee. Only one LAA holds an election each year. This year the LAA open in Roosevelt County includes owners and operators who have land east of the Big Muddy.

The nominee must sign the nomination form in order to be nominated as a COC member. Nomination forms are available at the County FSA Office or by logging on to the Montana FSA website at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mt>.

County committee members are the local voice of how FSA programs are administered to meet local community and resource needs.

Nomination forms must be submitted to the FSA County Office by **August 1, 2008**.

### **Measurement Service Charges**

On farm measurements are charged at:

- Basic farm fee of \$30.00;
- Plus an hourly rate of \$16.00 for the first hour and \$8.00 for each additional ½ hour after the first hour. The minimum is 1 hour.

The hourly rate includes the time to travel from the FSA Office to the farm, the time to complete the measurement service and return to the county office.

An "Initial Fee" is required at the time the measurement service is requested and the fee must be collected before the measurement service is performed. The initial fee will be the basic rate plus the hourly minimum. Once the service has been completed the actual fee will be calculated. The initial fee will be subtracted from the calculated fee and a letter will be sent informing you of the additional amount owed. If the amount is \$9.99 or less then an additional fee is not required.

### **Measurement Service Charges (cont.)**

In-office measurements are charged at:

- a basic farm rate of \$15.00 plus a 30-minute minimum rate of \$8.00.

Bin site measurements will be calculated according to the farm number and the physical location of the bins:

- for one farm with multiple bin sites, only one FSA-409 (a written request to have acreage measured by FSA) is required;
- for multiple farms and all the grain is stored in bins at one site, only one FSA-409 is required where the bin site is physically located;
- for multiple farms with a different bin site for each farm, a separate FSA-409 is required for each farm and bin site.

### **DCP Fruit and Vegetable Plantings**

The 2008 Farm Bill has currently not been passed. FSA cannot predict the final terms of what Congress will adapt, however, to ensure compliance with pending farm bill proposals, producers with plans of planting fruit and vegetables (FAV's) in 2008 need to be aware of planting restrictions. These restrictions applied to base acreage during the 2002 Farm Bill. Please contact the county office for a list of FAV restricted crops. When planting FAV's, producers had the following options:

1. Plant FAV's on a participating farm's "free acres".
2. Plant FAV's on base acreage of a participating farm that has a farm FAV history and takes an acre-for-acre reduction in the DCP payment. NOTE: Farm FAV history is based on the FAV planting history for 1991-1995 or 1998-2001.
3. Plant FAV's on base acreage of a participating farm without farm FAV history, using the producer's FAV history and takes an acre-for-acre reduction in DCP payment. NOTE: Producer FAV history is based on the planting history the producer has of each specific FAV crop.
4. Plant FAV's on a nonparticipating farm.

### **EQIP Signup**

Sign up is currently underway at the Culbertson and Poplar USDA Service Centers for the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). This is the primary program used to address conservation issues on the nation's private and tribal lands. It provides cost share assistance for land owners and managers to implement a wide variety of conservation practices. Practices include, but are not limited to: Improving wildlife habitat, developing livestock grazing systems and the supporting practices such as water developments and cross fences required to implement them, improving the efficiency of existing irrigation systems, reclaiming saline seeps, seeding cropland back to pasture, 1<sup>st</sup> time no-till farming, and precision fertilizer application.

Due to the popularity of the program and funding limitations signup is nearly a year in advance. Interested producers need to sign up prior to June 2<sup>nd</sup> to be eligible for 2009 contracts. To sign up, or get more information about EQIP, stop by your local USDA Service Center.

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